

From: Bob Rattner
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 11/16/01 9:12am
Subject: MICROSOFT SETTLEMENT

Dear DOJ,

After reviewing the Settlement Documents, I do not believe that Microsoft will be effectively constrained by the proposal, nor will its monopoly be neutralized. I urge a more detailed review of the charges, and significantly stronger penalties and controls.

As a consumer, I have little complaint about Microsoft desktop products; indeed the PC upon which I am composing this note runs Windows and other MS code. While some of the anti-competitive practices related to desktop PCs are real, and have been addressed in the proposed settlement, there is a much larger issue; a Microsoft monopoly of the browser market and the Worldwide Web.

I have two points:

1. Security Risk. Microsoft is the portal of choice for hackers, particularly those who spread viruses. Every major virus propagated in recent years has been spread through Outlook. As a nation, can we afford to allow one company to control the Internet, and allow it to be sabotaged? I think not.
2. Media Monopoly. As the Web becomes more integrated with other media (such as Television), we run the risk of having one company capture an overwhelming share of news and information services. Just as there are laws which limit the ownership of multiple media/news media by a single publisher or broadcaster, we should be protected against an Internet/Network operator's ability to control public information.

In summary, the questionable marketing tactics used by Microsoft, and the effects on consumers (and our currently frail economy), are minor issues compared to their greater corporate goal of a "Microsoft Web". The time to address this is now. Microsoft should be ordered to remove its browser and network code from all PC desktops, and promote/market them separately on a CD or elsewhere. Simultaneously, Windows should be made to accomodate other browsers easily, though open source coding. Consumers are just too lazy to remove the MS options on their own, and Microsoft knows it!

Respectfully submitted,

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